



Peshtigo River State Forest Visitor



Peshtigo River State Forest • N10008 Paust Lane • Crivitz, WI 54114 • www.dnr.wi.gov

Welcome to the Peshtigo River State Forest!

Established in 2001, the Peshtigo River State Forest was purchased from the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS) to protect the Peshtigo River watershed and to supply wood products for the state timber industry. The state forest currently includes roughly 5,300 acres of former WPS hydroelectric lands along the Peshtigo River and its flowages. At the end of 2004, the state forest will acquire another 3,400 acres from WPS and the state forest will total over 11,000 acres of land and water. The state forest will continue to supply recreation along the Peshtigo River with many of the organizations the WPS partnered with, including Marinette County and the Town of Stephenson.

The Northern State Forests

The Peshtigo River State Forest is the most recent addition to the State's northern forests. It joins the Black River, the Brule River, the Flambeau River, the Governor Knowles, and the Northern Highland American Legion State Forests. Together they comprise more than 430,000 acres and numerous places where you can fish, hike, and canoe in virtual solitude.

State forests offer both primitive and developed camping. In most of the northern state forests you will find campgrounds with only pit toilets and hand-pumps for drinking water. However, the state forests do have some developed campsites with flush toilets and shower buildings. For those who prefer to get away from it all, there are also wilderness or backpack sites. With a permit, visitors may camp outside of a designated campground which makes it feel like you are the only person around.

Other recreation opportunities include hundreds of miles of hiking and canoe trails, picnic grounds, thousands of acres of water to fish, plus numerous hunting opportunities. In autumn, the pace slows down offering you excellent wildlife viewing and other sightseeing opportunities. In the wintertime, you can find snowmobile trails, ice fishing, cross country skiing, winter camping and snowshoeing.



You may find yourself wondering what is a state forest, and how is it different from a state park? Within the Department of Natural Resources organization, a state forest receives its leadership and guidance from the Division of Forestry, whereas a state park receives its leadership and guidance from the Bureau of Parks and Recreation. A key difference between a state park and a northern state forest is the availability of recreational amenities. A state park generally offers a more modern camping experience- with running water and electrical campsites. A campground at a northern state forest is typically more rustic, with only a minimal

number of electrical sites or modern bath facilities that are offered.

Another observable difference between a state park and a state forest is active timber management. The state park mission is to provide educational and recreational opportunities. The state forest mission is to manage for the principles of sustainable forestry, multiple uses, along with providing recreational and educational experiences. The principles of sustainable forestry are used to assure that the forest can, and will continue to provide a full range of benefits such as wood products, wildlife habitat and clean water to the people and visitors of Wisconsin. Although some practices differ between a state park and a state forest, there is plenty for you to enjoy at each type of property!

Master Planning Process

WPS owned lands have historically been open to public recreation. The DNR will continue to promote public recreation on these properties and to protect natural features. A specific management plan for the Peshtigo River State Forest will be developed through the master plan process in accordance with the Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter NR 44. Public input into the management of these lands will be key to the plan's development. The master plan will be based on an integrated approach to management, which includes sustainable forestry, wildlife, fish, and non-game management. Also addressed in the master plan is the development of management strategies for recreational activities such as hunting, snowmobiling, hiking, and cross-country skiing that currently take place on the property.

You can make a difference in how the Peshtigo River State Forest will be managed in the future! For more information on the state forest master plan and to be added to our mailing list, contact the forest headquarters, or visit us on the web at dnr.wi.gov/master_planning.

What About Our Neighbor?

Governor Thompson State Park

The Governor Thompson Centennial State Park is nestled between the Peshtigo River State Forest on the south shore of Caldron Falls Reservoir in Marinette County, about 13 miles northwest of Crivitz. The majority of the 2,000+ acre parcel was purchased in 2001 to commemorate the first 100 years of the Wisconsin State Park System. Like the Peshtigo River State Forest, the park's land includes former Wisconsin Public Service lands and the former Paust's Woods Lake Resort. The park is currently closed to the public until designated use areas and facilities can be made available. Creating a state park is a multi-step process and this property has come a long

way. For the past 2 years, the DNR has been drafting a master plan for the development and use of the park. This intense process involves DNR experts, other state agencies, town and county officials, local interest groups, neighbors, and the general public, coming together to decide what types of recreation and development should be allowed in the new park. The draft master plan is anticipated to be available spring of 2004 with the final master plan approved by the Natural Resources Board this summer. After the plan is approved, the park will be ready to have roads, trails, and other use areas developed within it. Once opened, the new park will be well on its way to becoming a recreational partner with the state forest.



Information

Peshtigo River State Forest
N10008 Paust Lane
Crivitz, WI 54114
715/757-3965

Normal business hours are
Monday – Friday: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.
We are a field office; hours and days may vary.
Please call ahead.

Emergency Contact Information

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Peshtigo River State Forest..... | 715/757-3965 |
| Marinette County Sheriff | 911 or 715/732-7600 |
| Oconto County Sheriff | 911 or 715/834-6900 |
| Forest Fires: DNR Office- Peshtigo | 715/582-5000 |
| Bay Area Medical Center, Marinette (Hospital with an ER) | 715/735-4200 |
| Bay Area Medical Clinic, Crivitz | 715/854-3823 |



Classification of Rapids

The following ratings are based on the International Scale of River Difficulty (ISRD), as described in *Whitewater; Quietwater*¹. The rapids and their location are indicated on the map. These ratings are intended to give the canoeist an idea of what to expect along the river. The water levels along the river can fluctuate. It is important for the canoeist to be aware of river conditions and the seasonal variations that occur. The Department does not monitor the river for these changing conditions and cannot guarantee the accuracy of the ratings for any given time. Please be careful, use common sense, and enjoy your canoe trip on the Bois Brule River.

Class I – These are very easy rapids that have small, uniform waves with clear channels. If there are obstacles (e.g. rock gardens) that require maneuvering to avoid, there is little current to interfere or to increase the hazard of a mistake. Fast moving water with riffles and small waves are characteristic. Class I rapids should cause no problem for novices in open canoes.

Class II – These are relatively easy rapids with only intermediate difficulty or with longer, more continuous stretches of easy rapids. Novices with decked craft should have few problems with class II. Occasional maneuvering may be required which can be handled by persons of intermediate ability using open canoes.

Class III – These are difficult rapids with numerous, large, irregular waves, capable of swamping an open canoe. Intricate maneuvering, physical strength, and canoeing know-how are all necessary to get through class III rapids. We recommend using only decked boats, thereby avoiding all chance of swamping. Some experts are able to run class III rapids in open boats; however, we recommend against this.

¹Palzer, Bob and Jody, *Whitewater; Quietwater*, 8th edition, 2nd printing
Birmingham, AL: Menasha Ridge Press, 2001.

On the River



Paddling on the Peshtigo

Abundant whitewater and quietwater paddling opportunities exist on the Peshtigo River and surrounding rivers and streams. The Peshtigo River enters the state forest boundary north of Caldron Falls Flowage. Here the water is fairly calm with only a slight current. As the water enters Caldron Falls, the current continues to subside as the river widens. This is an excellent area for both canoeists and kayakers as there are many bays to explore. Caldron Falls is a popular flowage for fisherman and other water recreational users. Canoeing the flowage to the Caldron Falls dam takes approximately 4 hours. *

There is a short portage around the Caldron Falls dam and here the river narrows before it enters High Falls Flowage. Here the river current is still fairly calm. As the river enters High Falls, be cautious of the prevalent power boaters and jet skiers. Canoeists and kayakers will have fun investigating many bays. Canoeing the flowage to the High Falls dam takes approximately 4.5 hours. *

After the High Falls dam, the river narrows as it enters Johnson Falls, and remains very calm. Canoeing this flowage to the Johnson Falls dam takes approximately 2.5 hours. *

The river gathers speed after the Johnson Falls dam, which is the beginning of the Seymour Rapids and Spring Rapids areas. In addition to being an excellent trout fishery, it offers some great Class I-II rapids for canoeists and kayakers.

* Depending upon weather, water levels, and ability—canoe times are approximate.



Boating

With all the available surface water in the area, it is not surprising that recreation boating is a major attraction. Within Peshtigo River State Forest there are 5 boat landings around Caldron Falls, 7 boat landings around High Falls, 2 boat landings in the Peshtigo and Potato Rapids Flowages, and 1 landing on Johnson Falls (small watercraft recommended). No fee is required for use of boat launch areas at this time. Boats may not be left moored, anchored, or unattended at any state forest landing.

The number of boaters in Wisconsin has grown tremendously in the past decade. It is increasingly important that boaters become educated on safe boating techniques and laws. To find out when upcoming boater safety courses are offered through the DNR, visit our website at dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cs/registrations/boats.htm. Or you may take an on-line safety course at: www.boatingbasicsonline.com



Canoeing and River Camping Tips

Canoeists, kayakers, anglers, and other users appreciate and respect the Peshtigo River for its natural beauty. Adhering to the river regulations of the Peshtigo River State Forest will provide a positive and enriching experience while on the river.

1. Camping is allowed at designated canoe campsites for **one night** only. Users must travel by watercraft, **no** walk in camping.
2. There is **no** drinking water available at the campsites or at any of the landings. Please bring your own water.
3. There are no garbage containers on the river. **Pack out all refuse. Do not litter.**
4. Each camp area has a pit toilet. Please do not deposit litter in the toilets.
5. Build fires in approved fire rings provided. Please use caution.
6. Be sure to have approved flotation devices- one for each occupant.
7. Dead and down wood may be used for firewood. Please do not damage standing trees.
8. Keep noise to a minimum. Sound carries great distances on water. Have respect for other river users.
9. Use extreme caution when near or portaging around the dams. Currents are unpredictable and quite powerful. Respect dam warning lights and sirens. These signals warn to watch for open dam gates and changing water levels.

Safety first – always wear your PFD (Personal Flotation Device). Out of the 19 fatal boating related accidents in 2003, 11 people were not wearing a PFD!



Fishing

For the angler who likes variety, the Peshtigo River State Forest is the place for you! The following flowages here on the Peshtigo River offer excellent angling opportunities:

➡ Caldron Falls supports a high quality muskellunge fishery and is the only Class A muskie water in Marinette County. Other fishing opportunities include large and smallmouth bass, walleye, bluegill, rock bass, yellow perch, black crappie, and pumpkinseed.

➡ High Falls, like Caldron Falls supports an excellent fishery of walleye and large and smallmouth bass. Major panfish species include bluegill, rock bass, yellow perch, black crappie, and pumpkinseed.

➡ Principal gamefish found in Johnson Falls include northern pike, large and smallmouth bass, walleye, muskellunge, brown trout, and rainbow trout.

➡ The Potato Rapids fisheries include northern pike, smallmouth bass, and walleye. There are also a number of panfish including rock bass, bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie, and yellow perch.

➡ A 5-mile stretch of the Peshtigo River is designated as a trout fishery and special regulations apply. Only artificial lures may be used and the daily bag limit is 2 trout. Consult the most current issue of “Trout Fishing Regulations and Guide” for other restrictions. Fishermen find not only trout, but northern pike, walleyes and smallmouth bass.

Other Recreational Opportunities

For those of you who are looking for recreation on land, the PRSF has plenty to offer. The forest is open to equestrian riding and off-road biking unless signs are posted prohibiting these uses on the trail.

Cross-country Skiing and Hiking



The forest supports a groomed ski trail network, however all the state forest is open to cross-country skiing if you enjoy the challenge of breaking trail. The state forest, along with Marinette County, private landowners, and the Marinette County Cross Country Ski Club Association operate 30 km of regularly groomed ski trails. These trails are groomed for both traditional and skate skiers. 13 km of these trails run through the state forest and connects to the 17km that run through the county forest and private land. Two trailheads exist near the state forest boundary: the Spring Rapids Trail Head is roughly 1 mile off of Kirby Lane, and the Seymour Rapids Trail head which is approximately 2 miles off of Bushman Road. No trail pass is required for these trails at this time.

During the summer months, these trails also double as designated hiking

trails. While on these trails you will have the opportunity to encounter a range of flora and fauna. Wildlife watchers will also have plenty to look for in the state forest. Bald eagles and osprey are often seen along the Peshtigo River diving for food or guarding their territory. Deer, bear, turkey, ruffed grouse, Sandhill cranes, Canadian geese are some of the wildlife commonly viewed in the forest.

In addition to these designated trails, there are many other trails maintained by volunteers as well as hunter walking trails throughout the forest for you to enjoy.

Snowmobiling / ATV



The Peshtigo River State Forest provides for roughly 20 miles of snowmobile trails with access to the 1,300 miles of trail offered regionally. During winter months only, many of the snowmobile trails are also open to ATV use.

The state forest does not have any trails specifically designated for ATVs. However, regionally there are 400 miles of year-round trails in existence. ATV use anywhere other than on a designated trail or route is illegal.

Don't forget about our Wildlife Areas

There are two great wildlife areas near the forest. The Lake Noquebay Wildlife Area and the Peshtigo Harbor Unit – Green Bay West Shores. Both locations offer an opportunity to take pride in Wisconsin's vast treasure of wildlife resources. Escape from your daily routine amidst the marshes, forests, and uplands and enjoy the natural beauty of Wisconsin. For more information on either wildlife area, please contact the Peshtigo DNR at 715/582-5000.

Lake Noquebay Wildlife Area includes 1,300 acres of state-owned land. It is located 13 miles northeast of Crivitz and can be accessed off Highways X and W. Principal wildlife in the area includes waterfowl, ruffed grouse, and deer. Additional recreational activities include hiking and birdwatching.

The Peshtigo Harbor Unit was established in 1954 and includes 3,660 acres of state-owned land. The area is about 5 miles southeast of Peshtigo. Principal wildlife and recreational opportunities are also similar to Lake Noquebay, except at the Peshtigo Harbor visitors have access to fishing along the river.

Respect Wildlife: Observe wildlife from a distance that they consider safe. Use binoculars, spotting scopes, and telephoto camera lenses to get a closer look. A car or drifting canoe makes a good viewing blind. If animals stop eating, look at you with heads up or ears pointed toward you, or if they appear nervous or "skittish" when you move or make a noise, you are definitely too close for their comfort. Either sit down quietly or move slowly away until their behavior relaxes.

Don't feed the animals: Feeding wildlife can be harmful... to them and to you! Animals that become accustomed to receiving handouts, such as in a campground, tend to frequent these areas. Hand-fed animals can become aggressive or annoying to people. Migratory birds may tend to stay longer in the winter when they really would be better off in southern climates. And mammals that hibernate may not gain the proper weight due to the poor nutrition which most human handouts provide.



Do You Have a Disability?

The Department of Natural Resources is making an effort to provide accessible park and forest recreation facilities for people with special needs. We would like to hear from you regarding this effort and welcome your suggestions and comments.

There are disabled fishing access locations at Boat Landings 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8. If you are using these facilities, we would like to know what your opinion is, what you like and don't like, or any suggestions you have. Please write to us at N10008 Paust Lane, Crivitz WI 54114.

Our Concern, Your Safety

The safety of forest visitors is a priority so please be careful at all times and please impresses safety precautions on your children. Following are some precautions to keep in mind.

Boating

All crafts must be equipped with a Coast Guard approved lifesaving device for each person aboard. Wearing these devices at all times is recommended. Do not overload your craft. Use extreme caution when operating near the dams and respect dam warning lights and sirens. Boaters should be aware of their wake and use caution when near other watercraft and steer clear of swimmers. Please consult the "Wisconsin Boating Regulations" for additional rules.

Hiking

Please be aware that trails may vary in difficulty. Stay well away from cliffs that aren't protected by barricades. Trail surfaces may become slippery when wet or leaf-covered and can occasionally have loose sand, gravel or exposed rock.

Swimming

There are no designated beaches in the Peshtigo River State Forest. Whenever you swim, don't swim alone, at night, or in unfamiliar places. Do not dive from bridges, high banks, or into water of unknown depths. Stay clear of all dams; currents are unpredictable and quite powerful. Use caution when wading into unknown waters, as water depth may change abruptly. Children should be watched closely when near the water. Public beaches are available at Twin Bridges County Park, the Town of Stephenson Park, and Badger Park in Peshtigo.

Plants

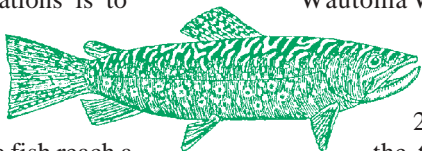
Never eat berries or plant parts unless you are certain of their identity.

Fires

Fires are only allowed in designated fire rings. Fires in any other location other than a fire ring are extremely dangerous and illegal. Fires cannot be left unattended. Make sure your fire is **Dead Out** before leaving.

Thunder River Rearing Station

Have you ever been to a fish rearing station before? The reason small fish are brought to rearing stations is to protect them during the vulnerable stages of their life. Fish eggs are hatched at fish hatcheries but once the fish reach a certain size, they are transferred to rearing stations to be raised by fisheries managers. Visiting our rearing station offers a great opportunity learn more about the fish life cycle at this facility.



Brown trout are sent to us from the tranquil Wild Rose Fish Hatchery near Wautoma Wisconsin. Each May the station receives about 240,000 when they are about 2 1/2 inches long. All the trout raised here are stocked into Green Bay and Lake Michigan. The best time to see the trout is from May through October.

The Coho salmon are brought in from the Lake Mills Hatchery near

the Town of Lake Mills. The station receives them in October when they are about five inches long. The best time to see the salmon is from October through April.

The rearing station is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., seven days a week from the third week in May until the third week in October. The rest of the year, the station is open Monday through Friday. Please call ahead to request a tour at 715/757-3541. Our address is W13562 Hatchery Road, Crivitz WI 54114.

Remember...Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!



Unlawful Campfire:
Used for eliminating garbage or trash. Oily substances, plastic, rubber, aluminum, treated paper or cardboard is not allowed!



Safe Campfire:
Solely used for cooking and warming. Only clean dry wood is allowed!



Just like home...
"Don't forget to take out the trash!"

Welcome to your state forest! You'll notice a change in the picnic areas, shelters, beaches, and other day-use areas...no garbage or recycling bins.

From now on, when you visit many Wisconsin state parks, forests, and recreation areas, you'll need to take your garbage and recyclables home with you. Why the change?

Home away from home: The parks belong to all of us...and just like home...we need to care for them and keep them clean.

Less mess: Removal of the garbage and recycling containers eliminates the smells and mess they create. It also cuts down on yellow jackets and other pests.

Reduce, reuse, recycle: Wisconsin state law requires us to recycle many materials we used to throw away. Better yet, we can make new choices of what to bring with us. The more reusable things we pack, the less garbage we'll create. It's good for us and for our earth home.

Thanks for helping out by carrying out what you've carried in.

Campfire Safety

If a fire is desired and conditions are favorable, use an existing fire ring or charcoal grill.

1. Keep tents and gear at least 10 feet away from the fire.
2. Never leave your campfire unattended and always have a shovel and bucket of water on site.
3. When finished, drown your campfire thoroughly with water and stir the ashes.
4. Scrape all embers off of the partially burned sticks and logs.
5. Check the entire area outside the campfire circle for any hot embers. Remember that it only takes one spark or ember to start a forest fire!
6. Add more water to your fire and stir again until it's cold—**Dead Out**.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternate format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.) upon request. Please call 608-267-7494 for more information.



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